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CENTRAL

MY

FATHER'S KNELL:

Poems,

IN MEMORY OF

S. G.,

WHO WAS DROWNED NEAR GLOUCESTER, MASS., AUGUST 16TH, 1850,
AGED LIII.

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PREFACE.

Few words are needed by way of preface to a volume not meant for general use, printed merely to avoid repeated transcriptions, and read, for the most part, by those bound either to subject or writer, in ties of family affection or long friendship.

Yet as two or three passages, considered separately, may seem to breathe a degree of sadness inconsistent with Christian hope, it may not be amiss to mention that this is by no means their design. They do but attempt to express, in turn, some of the darker phases of feeling incident to a real sorrow.

Such feelings of course differ, according to the temperaments of different sufferers, and the scenes around them. Over some heads the shadow of affliction passes with comparative speed,—their life-tempests, though heavy for a time, soon cease, leaving behind them an air all the purer, a sunshine all the more brilliant, for the brief darkness. But in other cases they are more like that which befell St. Paul on his way to Italy, "when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared,"

and escape from shipwreck proved but the forerunner of wearisome captivity. The cloud may, now and then, divide and yield glimpses of the serene brightness beyond it; yet, when these are over, Heaven seems again absent—sorrow is present—and the heart sinks.

For this state there is but one cure—"looking unto Jesus." The exulting songs of a faith less tried or more triumphant, may fall on the sad spirit like trumpet-notes of cheer upon the heart of a wounded soldier left alone by the way-side. Inspiriting to others, they only deepen the anguish of one who cannot arise and answer their call. But the thought that He who sends trial was Himself "acquainted with grief," can change murmuring into submission, and induce a willingness to follow that Saviour with patience, if not with rejoicing, to the end.

Since he—so tenderly loved, so truly mourned—in memory of whom these verses are written, was taken away, how many of his associates and kinsfolk have followed! Scarcely will this little book find its way into a single household "where there is not one dead;" and doubtless this very fact will do much toward winning for it a welcome.

To his surviving friends and kindred it is now offered in affectionate trust, as a memorial of the departed.

New York, May 5, 1856.

POEMS.

ON READING TENNYSON'S "IN MEMORIAM."

O FAIR memorial! thou wert planned
In poet-vision, purged by tears;
And thou wert piled through lingering years
Of love and grief, with tireless hand.

For Love alone so rich a store
Of thoughts like jewels, ever brought
From secret mines, in stillness wrought,
No Grief less faithful might explore.

And lavished now, as treasure spent
On saintly tombs, they serve to show
His wealth of heart who sleeps below,
And his, who reared the monument.

For while we read, the rainbow light
From stainéd oriel seems to fall
Aslant on snowy marble pall,
With chisell'd broidery bedight;

And marble mourners, carved with care,
In motionless attendance kneel,
As though their vigil could reveal
How he was loved whose dust is there.

My own dear Father, could *my* sighs
Embalm thy name in deathless song,—
Or could *my* tears, by process long,
Thus into splendors crystallize,—

Then with what gladness would I raise
By patient toil, as pure a shrine,
And from oblivion worth like thine
There shelter for a few brief days!

Alas, I cannot even tell
How funeral wreaths may best be twined,
Or in thy chaplet blossoms bind,
Of amaranth and asphodel:

Yet as through village lanes, a sound
Regretful sweeps from passing bell,
Numbering the years with solemn knell,
Of one in cerements newly wound;

So the deep love within my soul
In long vibration still intones
Our loss afresh, and daily moans
Thy death, with melancholy toll.

We will not rear some costly stone
To publish how our dear one died,
Nor suffer idle tongues to chide
His requiem's plaintive monotone:

Ah no! let reverent footsteps tread
Beside the turf where violets be,
And only eyes which loved him see
The words that mourn our holy dead.

I.

HOME AS IT WAS.

We had a home, a happy home, a home that never changed,
Though site and casing varied oft, and far its members ranged;
A spirit-tent, with magic folds, to curtain us around,
Repelling every evil thing from their enchanted bound.

It stood within a city's walls, and yet in bustling mart,
The hum of business could not drown the music of the heart;
It crossed the seething ocean, and rough gales in fury blew,
But failed to rive one bulwark of a love so firm and true.

'Twas then a simple cabin, o'erhung by locust trees,
Where fragrant blossomings allured the humming-bird and bees,
And the bright-crested rover, as he bent to kiss the flowers,
Seemed like happiness alighting on that quiet home of ours.

Next from its roofing gazed we forth upon a noble bay,
There argosies from every clime in floating phalanx lay;
But oh! how trifling looked the gauds of luxury and pride,
To us whose chosen place of rest was by each other's side.

We had no need of alien mirth to make our household gay,
For a glad atmosphere of peace encircled it alway;
And faith grew stronger when, at times, affliction's gentle rain
Brushed from its drooping leaves the dust, and bade it bloom again.

We had been told that bliss was brief, we knew life's
brittle thread
Could easily be severed, and all its pearls be shed;
But still we hoped our own bright home for many a
year might stay,
Ere from the precious belt of love dropped one fami-
liar ray.

The callow birdling tranquil lies, yet unaware how
blest,
Nor sees the tempest gathering to hurl away its nest;
For downy is the fragile couch, the parent wings are
warm,
And it has not learned to tremble at vague omens of
a storm.

So lived we in our happy home, until Death's shadow
fell
Across the threshold suddenly, and overcame the
spell,
Rent for awhile our charméd roof of shelter from the
blast,
And left us but a rifled home, whence light and joy
had past.

II.

HOME AS IT IS.

A STILL, secluded spot
Where man intrudeth not,
Though close along the beaten way it lies;
The terraces are green,
And cedar-branches screen,
Those modest tenements that round it rise:
And there the sun's rays pause at eve,
As dear friends linger ere they take their leave.

Unto the postern low,
I often, often go,
And could "continual coming" entrance win,
Long since mine eager will
Had gained the wished-for skill
To put aside the bolts, and pass within,
And now my vexéd soul might share
The peace inherited by dwellers there.

Alas! that fierce assault
Is in itself a fault,
And proves that I the meet credentials lack,
All passionless and calm,
Each breast and folded palm,
At whose approach the rigid doors fly back,
And leave the path unchallenged, free,
Welcoming them, though pitiless to me.

I linger there in Spring,
And hear the wild birds sing
In the blue dome, above the cedars flying;
For in my heart their lay
Tells of a sunnier day
When, to my mute advance at length replying,
Those long-locked portals will unclose,
And I shall taste an unimpaired repose.

And when the autumnal breeze
Sighs through the rustling trees,
Clothed in the raiment of their bright decay,
(Like the resplendent dress
Some youthful votaress
Wears when she turns her from the world away,
Her gorgeous robes and crown of pride,
Soon for white coif and vesture flung aside.)

Then wistfully I wait
For hours before the gate,
In fruitless watching for some furtive sign ;
The Warders dare not swerve,
And in austere reserve,
Meet with their silence every plea of mine ;
No force is needed to withstand
The feeble efforts of my feeble hand.

Impatient heart, be still !
One day the grating will
Repulse no longer, though thou cease to pray ;
Encloistered thou must hide
Thy buried ones beside,
And then thou wilt forget the flinty way,
Where thy unwilling feet now roam,
Far from the precincts of thy peaceful home.

III.

HOME AS IT WILL BE.

HOME as it will be! O the vision rises
In perfect loveliness, refulgent, pure,
As sudden moonlight joyfully surprises
One lost at nightfall on a pathless moor!

Home as it will be! Would the veil were lifted,
Shrouding its pinnacles in golden haze;
And would some fragments of its wealth were drifted
O'er the dim channel mocking our sad gaze.

*One who in spirit saw our home, narrated
His rapt remembrances, in tones that seem
With the full harmonies of Heaven dilated,
Caught from the "harpers harping" in his dream.

* Rev. ch. 1 : 10 and chaps. 21 and 22.

Transparent streams, through greenest meadows flowing,
And odorous incense, wafted on the air,
And trees of life, their mellow fruits bestowing
On holy beings, walking white-robed there;

Seas in their smoothness, like a crystal flooring,
Half tesselate with clouds of ruby glow;
And emerald rays, that fall on saints adoring,
A shadowy limning of its beauty show.

For glorious were the far-off scenes unfolded
Before the loved disciple's eagle ken,
And glorious was the form wherein he moulded
Their blissful memory for his fellow-men.

But from another's lips* the tidings issue
In simpler phrase, yet with deep meaning fraught,
Craving the aid of no imperial tissue
To robe its inborn majesty of thought.

The flaming barrier for his way was levelled,
And palms of Paradise around him waved,
His trancéd ear in her rich music revelled,
While her weird lessons on his heart were graved.

* 2 Cor. xii. 1–4; Phil. i. 23.

But mortal tongue such secrets may not utter,
And in the strife both speech and symbol fail,
His bravest words in brief aspirings flutter,
Then with bowed pinions from the splendors quail.

And yet that Silence, in its dove-like brooding,
Bears to Faith's ear a message, sweet and clear,
As if an Eden-gale, the guard eluding,
Came whispering, "It is better there than here."

Home as it will be! From our side receding,
Beneath its lintel kindred feet have trod,
They wait us there, and we, 'mid briars impeding.
Still hasten onwards to our home with God.

Home as it will be! O, when re-united,
That untold "weight of glory," we shall share,
The house of praise, by God's own presence lighted,
May well outshine the earthly house of prayer!

IV.

TEARS.

Oh do not say my father sees
  Each heart-wrung tear I shed !
To deem him near me could not ease
  My sorrow for the dead.

I would not have him read the sign
  Of struggle with despair
Upon a face whose every line
  He used to think so fair.

I would not have him hear the cries
  I cannot yet control,
Nor ripple with my dreary sighs
  The quiet of his soul.

I would not have him watch my tears—
  Tears that would quickly cease,
Might his calm voice but chide my fears,
  And soothe me into peace.

And do not say "So great his gain,
  His affluence of joy,
Even the knowledge of thy pain
  Would bring it no alloy."

Can I believe he loves me less?
  My smiles could always raise
Smiles of responsive tenderness,
  In the old happy days.

And if a shade of saddening thought
  Upon my features fell,
How eagerly his fondness sought
  To share it, or dispel.

Tears were unlovely in his sight
  While he remained below;
Why should they trench on Heaven's delight?
  I would not have him know.

V.

ARISE MY LOVE, MY FAIR ONE, AND COME AWAY.

Was it the voice of a turtle-dove,
Her truant mate pursuing,
Filling the welkin with notes of love,
And his presence meekly wooing?
"Spring-time is coming in copse and glade,
"And rills are singing, and nests are made;
"Goodly the smell of the vine's young spray,
"Haste, my belovèd, come away!

Was it the murmur of southern breeze,
To a convalescent sighing
Of far savannahs 'mid foreign seas
That in bloom and warmth are lying?

" Come from this region of snow and mist,
" To an isle by unfailing sunlight kiss'd,
" There the soft Zephyrs in spice-groves play,
" Rise, O thou pale one, come away !"

Was it the cry of a nation's wrong,
In its simultaneous waking,
When the feudal harness strained so long,
As a worn-out withe is breaking ?
" Wilt thou follow forever a tyrant's beck,
" And bow at his bidding thy vassal-neck ?
" Turn not aside from the righteous fray,
" Thy country claims thee, come away !"

Was it a clarion's sudden sound,
On the hush of midnight pealing,
Bearing this message—" The foe is found,
" And his men on our flank are stealing !
" Yonder their files through the brushwood creep,
" Soon on the column our fire shall leap,
" Never a laggard may linger to-day,
" Hark to the onset ! come away !"

Was it some angel's dulcet song,
Through a darkened chamber thrilling,
And on the dying a foretaste strong,
Of the bliss of Heaven distilling ?

" Fain would we bear thee, in bright convoy,
" Up to a realm of unfading joy,
" Life hath no beauty to lure thy stay,
" Arise, O fair one, come away !"

Nay, dearest father, none of these
  Upon thy heart was pressing;
Nor ring-dove's moan, nor scented breeze
  Thy cheek and brow caressing,
Nor tocsin's clang, nor trumpet clear,
Had power to win thy willing ear;
Nor do I think an angel's lay
Could woo thee from thy child away.

One voice, one " still small voice" alone,
  O'er all thy wishes swaying,
In loving, but resistless tone,
  Could charm thee to obeying.
The Saviour spake: thy soul was stirred
At his low call, by us unheard;
That summons might not brook delay,
And *our belovèd* went away.

VI.

MY FATHER'S BOOK.

Written after his departure in a little volume of manuscript Poems, (so called,) which belonged to him.

Ah poor, neglected book!
How hard it is to look
Again on thy once over-cherished leaves;
They rouse afresh the sense
Of loss and grief intense,
Now brooding ever o'er our household eaves.

My Father's book no more,
The dear delight is o'er,
To soothe and cheer him with thine artless lays,
It is no joy to read,
He cannot hear or heed,—
And every line seems harsh without his praise.

Why, when his fingers last
Along thy pale leaves pass'd,
Did'st thou not warn him of that fearful day,
And mournfully unroll
Some sad Sibylline scroll,
To presage sorrow, and to bid him stay?

It is a bitter woe,
When love can never know
The latest utterance of departing life:
O could'st thou but reveal,
(Breaking the grave's thick seal,)
What thoughts thronged on him in that lonely strife!

Vain wishes—bootless now!
None, none may tell me how
His placid spirit left its earthly tent:
Of sky, and land, and sea,
I question wearily,
But answer to my cry is never sent.

The songs recorded here
Were full of buoyant cheer,
Drawn from the springs of love and hope within;
But now my darkened heart
Has lost its mirthful art,
And only breathes out murmurs, moans, and sin.

O little heeds the wren,
Far down in peaceful glen,
How loftily the eagle's flight may soar!
And voice of lilied brook,
Laving some verdurous nook,
Seeks not to emulate the ocean's roar.

The streams of nobler song
Might rush in strength along—
Bearing, like waifs, men's plaudits on their tide;
'Twas joy enough for him
To hear my simple hymn
Sung in the twilight by our own fireside.

Never—ah never more!
Till life's long grief be o'er,
Will those dear eyes in fond approval shine;
Nor that indulgent ear
Again be bent to hear
With partial praises each new lay of mine.

Yet, selfish heart and weak!
Though life to thee look bleak,
Why should *his* blessedness involve thy woe?
Because in light *he* walketh,
And with his Saviour talketh,
Our home is silent, and our footfall slow.

And seraph-voices clear,
Ring on his quickened ear,
For home's old melodies *he* doth not pine.
Most beautiful exchange!
Why should I call it strange,
If in their songs he have forgotten mine?

VII.

YEARNINGS.

Cold in death the frame now lieth,
  Dark and silent is its grave,
Scarce the Holy Book supplieth
  Knowledge my weak heart *will* crave;
    Prone to falter
    When God's Altar
Claims the thing that most we prize,
As a willing sacrifice.

O for a celestial missive!
  Dated in some bower of light,
Not with brightness too oppressive,
  Baffling the bewildered sight,

But in living
Language giving
Outlines of that Sabbath shore
Which the ransomed quit no more.

Though I read that Heaven is better
Than the holiest scenes below,
Free from sin and snare and fetter,
Still my spirit pants to know
If no yearning,
No fond turning
Ever draws the enfranchised mind
Toward the loving left behind.

When a transient beam of gladness,
(Brief, alas, as once my tears,)
Flits, unsummoned, o'er my sadness,
With a smile of happier years;
Oh, my treasure!
Once thy pleasure
Was to share and witness mine—
Is that joy no longer thine?

When the fangs of anguish keenly
Fasten on my orphan soul,
Canst thou sit in bliss serenely,
Heedless of my bitter dole?

Will my sobbing
Wake no throbbing
In the heart that used to thrill
At my lightest fear of ill?

Oh, I would not cloud thy joyance
With the vision of my woe!
Nor obtrude earth's dull annoyance
On thy mansion's stainless glow.
For that dwelling,
Far excelling
All we count most lovely here,
Harbors not one rebel tear.

Yet, belovéd, winds one query,
Thread-like, through my mazéd brain;
When, of lengthened warfare weary,
I approach the place of gain,
Wilt thou meet me,
Gently greet me
With the look and lip of yore?
Hail me thine for evermore?

Or will years of Heaven's refining
Purge all earlier loves away,
Till thy spirit, star-like shining,
Cares not for my slender ray?

Have the sages
Of past ages
Led thee to such glorious lore,
That thou needest me no more?

I may ask—but oh, how meagre
Is the answer to my call!
Ceaseless though my questions eager
On the Silence round me fall,
Their vain urgings
Break, like surgings
Of the fierce but sand-curbed wave,
On the impenetrable grave.

VIII.

THE SEALED FOUNTAIN.

Not as a cistern, desolate and shattered,
That mocks the asking eye,
Whence rural toilers long ago have scattered
In search of pools less dry;
With ruined walls which cannot hold
The draught so freely given of old;

Though 'neath the mosses on its rim half-broken,
May be deciphered still
Some pilgrim's praise, or carvings that betoken
How many quaffed at will;
Not thus shall now my memory dwell
Upon thy love's exhaustless well.

For while beside our pleasant home it waited,
  Thence, with delight each day
I gained new cordials for my thirst unsated,
  Until the shining spray
Seemed, in its pure perennial flow,
My antidote for every woe!

That fount of gladness now hath ceased to mingle
  Its song with this world's din;
Music and mirth have left our household ingle,
  And Sorrow sits therein;
Thy love no more our home may shield,
"A spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

'Tis like the treasure of sweet water hidden
  Down in a desert well;
The coping moves not, by its Chief unbidden,[1]
  The way-marks none can tell;
For touch or cry it will not yield,
"A spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

And as an Arab, 'mid the sand-heaps parching,
  Hastens his weary steed,
While his keen glances eagerly are searching
  Some pool where he may speed,
And pining for the store concealed
In the shut spring, the "fountain sealed."

So through this world my spirit vainly turneth
  Of thy lost love in quest;
The dreary waste, the stone-closed cell discerneth,
  But not the hidden guest.
Thy life, thy love are unrevealed,
  "A spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

There is another Fount, whose waters gliding,
  Sparkle less gaily by,
Yet their deep sources, undisturbed abiding,
  In the Myrrh-Mountains lie,
And passing thence, more virtue wield,
Than springs shut up, and fountains sealed.

O that my heart, Siloa's strength receiving,
  Could all its sweetness know!
But the leer channel evermore is grieving,
  Those waters "softly go;"
And the riven banks must wail unhealed
Their "spring shut up," their "fountain sealed,"

Till the long season of seclusion ended,
  The stone be rolled away,
And the clear waves, with kindred waters blended,
  Arise, in loftier play,
To prove no more, in Heaven's broad field,
"A spring shut up, a fountain sealed!"

IX.

FRIENDS IN HEAVEN.

"Blessed as it is to have friends on earth, it is still more blessed to have friends in Heaven."

GUESSES AT TRUTH.

Is it a pleasant thing to listen
When infants laugh,—to see
How guileless are the eyes that glisten
With such unfearing glee:
While yet their fancies fleet
Are fair as new-fallen snow,
Before defiling feet
Have trampled to and fro?
Aye; but in Heaven that trustful glance
Is never dimmed by Time's advance.

Is there a blessedness in knowing
That one beloved heart
On us its wealth of love bestowing,
Forms of our being part;

In days of sunny light,
Life unto rapture wedding,
And on the gloomiest night
Its own sweet lustre shedding?
Aye! but in Heaven the chilling dread
Lest death divide, itself is dead.

Is there a happiness in deeming
Forever, by our side,
Through busy toil, and quiet dreaming,
Attendant angels glide,
While from aërial foes,
And perils unforeseen,
They hourly interpose
Our feeble faith to screen?
Aye! but in Heaven no shadow hides
The service of our mystic guides.

Is there a higher bliss in gaining
Assurance of His love,
Who, once our weight of sin sustaining,
Now sits enthroned above;
While, through the lattice-folds,
Some golden glimpses shine,
Of joys the palace holds,
Ineffable, divine?

Aye! but in Heaven what bliss to share
Christ's life, and see His beauty there!

And he whose form so lately vanished
From our forsaken home,
Into far exile is not banished,
In deserts need not roam;
But hailed by gladsome throngs
Of wise and holy friends,
He learns their joyful songs,
And in their worship bends,
Where not a tinge of earth's sad leaven
Spoils the beatitude of Heaven.

Ah! from no trivial word a jarring,
In mirkiness may rise,
The full-orb'd light of friendship marring,
When friends are in the skies:
For all things good and true
Their purity retain,
And strength and splendor new
In long progression gain.
Time cannot change, nor distance sever,
The friends of Heaven are friends forever!

X.

WEAKNESS.

My Father! thou wert ever strong and firm;
A stalwart helper, towering at my side,
Seeking for aye to nurse in me the germ
Of patient trust, that like thee I might bide
Unruffled, amid sorrow's roughest tide:
Thou would'st not know me now, when, as a worm
Writhing in helplessness, and fiercely tried,
I have not strength to struggle through the term
Of my allotted anguish. I could bear
Much outward grief unmoved while thou wert here,
And in departing, had thy saintly boon[2]
Been the brave cloak of courage thou didst wear,
The beggar had not sunk bemired so soon,
Mourning life's sunshine overcast ere noon.

XI.

ACQUIESCENCE.

If thou wert ripe for Heaven, should Christ delay
To gather for Himself the sun-bathed fruit,
And save its precious clusters from decay,
Because our frailty craved thy longer stay,
And our wan tendrils, that in sickly shoot
Obscured thy beauty, must be rent away?
His larger plans our purposes uproot;
His wisdom may not with our wishes suit.
Why was our day of happiness so fleet?
Because the glad, soul-animating glow
Of thy bright presence made it too complete.
Ah! vainly do we look for rest below:
Here we must suffer—God hath willed it so—
And what He wills, dare we pronounce unmeet?

XII.

THE APPROACH OF DEATH.

Words and looks of placid sweetness,
When the close of life drew nigh,
Witnessed to thy growing meetness
For a land whence tumults fly.
Had some leaf or bourgeon, floated
From the continent of peace,
To thy tossing heart denoted,
Haven near and swift release?

Were there angels o'er thee leaning?
By soft touch and winsome tone,
From our weak enthralments weaning
One demanded for a throne?

Was a chrism of costly ointment
  Poured upon thy regal head ?
Heralding its high appointment,
  Through the fragrance thence far-spread.

Didst thou fare as royal maiden
  Meeting, ere her marriage morn,
Messengers with presents laden,
  Proving she is not forlorn,
But the home for which she grieveth,
  Though it charmed her childish view,
And the friends and love she leaveth
  Are not equal to the new ?

Passing to a realm of order,
  Quitting one of rude turmoil,
As thy foot approached the border,
  All the retinue of Toil,
Whose surveillance long oppressed thee,
  Breathed at once a last farewell,
Seeing robes of light invest thee,
  And their sheen adorn thee well.

I have heard of ancient vases,[3]
  Wrought in frail, mysterious ware,
That unfilled, to him who gazes
  Seem as lilies, chastely fair ;

Till, with genial vintage flushing,
Blossoms, grouped in rare design,
Through the porcelain are blushing,
Startled into life by wine.

Thus, unseen, from Eden's portal,
Silent cherubs near thee stole,
And with wine of life immortal,
Filled the beaker of thy soul;
Rising then to far-off palace
From our sight the vase they bore,
There, a consecrated chalice,
To be treasured evermore.

While they yet delayed their going
For a moment—through the side
Flowers of matchless hue came glowing,
To our daily ken denied:
Dimly and but half apparent,
Saw we first the tracing shine—
Then the opal grew transparent,
And the painting proved divine!

XIII.

A SABBATH EVENING.

AUGUST 11TH, 1850.

THE Sun died slowly, pillowed on the Sea—
Then cloudy factions for his sceptre strove,
And bore their banners far
Along the western heaven.

The calm cerulean, and the passive main
Each rival color unremonstrant wore,
As rose-tints crimson grew,
And crimson, tawny gold;

Till the Sun's heir, victorious Amber, waved
His bright Labarum over sky and sea;
Gazing meanwhile, we viewed
Their struggles from the shore.

Colossal boulders on our path looked down,
And answering headlands purpled in the sky,
And stillness, like a robe
Of peace, around us lay.

The gilded waves ebbed quietly away
With scarce a murmur. From celestial towers
A golden draw-bridge seemed
To droop, that summer eve.

Then softly was the Sabbath silence stirred
By Sabbath anthems, till we longed "to sit
"And sing ourselves away,
"To everlasting bliss."

And then we bade dark "unbelief begone,"
In timid trust no evil could befall
A bark where Jesus sate,
And Christians "smiled at storms."

Oh, tuneful strains! no prescience warned us then,
Ye were but preludes to a piteous dirge—
But swan-songs of delight,
Thenceforth to sound no more.

Oh lovely sunset! when thy dyes were gone,
We saw not how a triple night enclosed
The day—his precious life—
And all our earthly joy.

The twilight of another Sabbath came:
Its shadows lingered on a new-made grave,
And on two bleeding hearts,
Alone with their great woe.

XIV.

"WEEP NOT, FOR THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH HATH PREVAILED."

This text was the subject of some remarks at one of the last communion seasons attended by my father, which comforted him greatly, and were often referred to with delight.

O STRONG is Judah's Lion,
And firm His stately tread!
And while He guardeth Zion,
What danger can we dread?

Though weak our best resources,
And poor the front we form,
When proud, malignant forces
Arise, our camp to storm—

And though in baleful splendor,
Their burnished armor shines,
The breath of our Defender
Shall blast the serried lines!
For strong is Judah's Lion,
And firm His stately tread,
And while He guardeth Zion,
What danger can we dread?

Around the world's gay standard,
A host of vassals group;
She to their pride hath pandered,
And at her call they troop.
Long, long in fascination
Owned we that servile yoke,
Till the Strength of our Salvation
Through chain and philtre broke.
For strong is Judah's Lion,
And firm His stately tread!
And while He guardeth Zion,
What danger can we dread?

Forth from yon lurid banner,
There streams unearthly light,
While, in remorseless manner,
The demon-armies fight.

Like waves in fury swelling
They rise, and rend, and roar,
But a Voice, the tumult quelling,
Shall bid them rage no more.
For strong is Judah's Lion,
And firm His stately tread,
And while He guardeth Zion,
What danger can we dread?

There is deadlier mischief lurking
Within the leaguered wall,
And traitor hands are working
In secret, for its fall—
Yet is the subtle scheming,
Scanned by Unslumbering Eyes—
With fire eternal beaming—
They never knew surprise.
For strong is Judah's Lion,
And firm His stately tread!
And while He guardeth Zion,
What danger can we dread?

Yea, through Death's valley taking
Our solitary walk,
Where sins of past years, waking,
With vengeful menace stalk—

Still, still no evil fearing,
  Shall we not press along
Its far recesses cheering
  With the familiar song?
    O strong is Judah's Lion,
      And firm His stately tread!
    And while He guardeth Zion,
      What danger can we dread?

XV.

"I WENT OUT FULL, AND THE LORD HATH BROUGHT ME HOME EMPTY."

We went out full of peace,
Of union, love, and hope—
The daylight did not see
Aught happier than we
Beneath heaven's cope.

Not ours the peace of stones,
Buried in brooklet's bed,
Deaf to its song-like flow,
Heedless how wildly blow
Storms overhead.

But the quiet of the arch,
  Where, hewn and laid with art,
Each stone, as mason wills,
In calm obedience fills
  Its humble part.

The union of the cord
  In threefold strength encased,
And able to resist
Hands harmful to the twist
  Thus interlaced.

The love that sweetens life,
  As in some ferny dell,
A breath of perfume rare
Gives witching notice where
  Blue violets dwell.

The hope of autumn skies
  Whence morning mists have fled—
Although the sunshine goes,
Fair tints will o'er its close
  A glory spread.

This was our "time of wealth"—
  And oh, how brief its stay!
How speedily the stoop
Of Death, in falcon-swoop
  Bore all away!

Then from our lowly arch
  The crowning keystone fell—
Loosed was the triple strand—
Stripped by marauding hand
  The violet's dell.

And in the changing sky,
  A sheath of leaden clouds
Sends o'er the sylvan view
Its own portentous hue,
  And hope enshrouds.

Back to the empty house
  With emptier heart we come—
Our only solace stored
In this one truth—THE LORD
  HATH BROUGHT US HOME.

XVI.

WEARINESS.

Suggested by reading an account of one of the Arctic Expeditions.

"My soul is weary of my life"—
  The life that glided once along,
Through quiet scenes with beauty rife,
  Like a bright pinnace, swift and strong.
Now, bright no more, the keel is pent
  As in a silent Arctic sea,
And storms, with merciless intent,
  Are howling round her drearily.

Oh where are now the gladdening beams
  Which used to whiten all her sails
When they were borne o'er glassy streams,
  And swayed by none but favoring gales?

It is so long since daylight fell
  Upon this frozen, trackless wild,
That my dim eyes can hardly tell
  How sunshine looked, or summer smiled.

And where are now the blithesome strains
  By song-birds warbled from the shore?
Not one enlivening note remains—
  I only shudder at the roar
Of icebergs as they clash and grind,
  And shriek and struggle in their lair,
Lest soon our vessel shipwreck find
  'Midst the grim horrors couchant there.

Once, too, there was a graceful bark,
  My loved companion and my guide,
That stems no more these waters dark—
  Her sails unfurl, her pennons ride,
Where helm and canvas need not own
  The force of one unwelcome breeze,
While I am left to brave alone
  The perils found in Polar seas.

And hour by hour, in fear and wrath,
  I watch you iceberg's horrent frown,
Now threatening on our winter-path,
  To send destruction crushing down.

The cold, immense, vibrating mass,
  Seems a vast pendulum of woe:
And in its shade, my moments pass,
  Each like a flake of wandering snow.

"My soul is weary of my life,
  I speak in bitterness of soul:"
Amid these gusts of sin and strife,
  I cannot see Heaven's shining goal.
The flowers that blossom there are sweet,
  And founts of glory near them play—
But numb and nerveless are my feet,
  And Heaven is very far away!

XVII.

THE FAVORITE PSALM.

When a heavy weight of care,
That I know not how to bear,
On my spirit lies—
When the thoughts of past delight,
On my present dawnless night,
Like sad spectres rise;
Then I long to feel the charm
Of my father's favorite psalm.

Might his accents, low and sweet,
Each consoling line repeat,
Soon my fears would fly;
He could all my care destroy,
Or convert it into joy,
If he were but nigh,
And I should not crave the balm
Latent in his favorite psalm.

Men of Belial round me press,
Grief and doubt my soul possess
In continual dread;
Love has proved a broken reed,
Piercing in the hour of need,
Faith and hope are fled—
I am wearied with alarm,
Let me hear his favorite psalm.

Help and solace thence he drew,
And his chastened spirit grew
Pure and meek and strong;
And he learned to fret no more,
But with gentle patience bore
Undeservéd wrong;
Leaning on the Mighty Arm
Tendered in his favorite psalm.

Bring the much-worn volume, graced
With the strokes his pencil traced
Near each pondered verse;
Let the words he loved so well,
Every sinful murmur quell,
And my fears disperse,
While I find support and calm
In my father's favorite psalm.

XVIII.

THIRTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

(PARTIAL PARAPHRASE.)

Fret not, though ungodly foes
  Win success through evil-doing;
Justice on their pathway goes,
  Like a mower grass pursuing.

Cease from anger, and be still,
  In the Lord alone delighting;
He will keep thy soul from ill,
  All thy works of love requiting.

Trust Him then, in patience rest,
  Envy, hate, and wrath forsaking—
For the meek and true are blest,
  When the heart of guile is aching.

Though the good man's wealth be small,
  Yet his heritage is better
Than the pleasures that enthrall
  Many a reckless, thankless debtor.

God sustains him with His hand—
  Every change He wisely orders,
Till safe-housed in heavenly land,
  Full rejoicing crown his borders.

And the wicked, though in power,
  Like a bay-tree wide he spreadeth,
Falls in some unthought-of hour,
  As the bough a sere leaf sheddeth.

Mark the man, along whose way
  Upright deeds on faith attended—
Peace was with him day by day,
  And his life in peace is ended.

XIX.

DOUBTLESS HE IS AT REST.

"Doubtless he is at rest, though I find none without him."
LETTERS OF LADY RUSSELL.

"DOUBTLESS he is at rest—
  At rest, though I find none."
Should not the victor rest,
  Since victory is won?
And in a royal tent
  That overlooks the field,
Fatigue and triumph blent
  A smooth, soft pillow yield?

"At rest, though I find none"—
  The ebb and flow of years
Bring me, since he hath gone,
  Few joys and many tears;
But grief's thick tangling weeds
  Cumber the waves once clear,
And joy's light skiff recedes
  In vain—he is not here.

When, by the woodman's axe,
The forest-trees are fell'd,—
Think ye no anguish racks
The vines they once upheld?
Far off the pine is borne,
But the crimson leaves that clung
Around it, thence are torn
And on sharp thickets flung.

And as the ship goes by
Still shores and flowery leas,
Beneath the cloudless sky
O'er-arching tropic seas,
Doth the tall arrowy mast
Those earth-prone tendrils heed,
Left in the autumn blast
To shiver, trail, and bleed?

The noble oak, if made
A prop for lordly halls,
Or quaintly carved, and laid
On high cathedral stalls;
Will it, 'mid chants of praise,
For mossy garlands care,
That once, in greenwood days,
Its branches loved to wear?

And thou, my stately elm,
  Borne in full strength away,
To flourish in a realm
  Unsullied by decay;
Thy head no tempest bows,
  Thy changes all are o'er;
Pillar in God's own house,
  Thou shalt go forth no more!

Why then, with selfish call,
  Should I thy peace disturb?
Why, in my garden-wall,
  Thy sunlit foliage curb?
Or murmur, though bereft,
  When God has given to thee
A rest so sweet, and left
  The restlessness to me?

XX.

THE PARTING YEAR.

DECEMBER 31ST, 1851.

PASS, 'mid tempests raging,
  Pass, dark year!
For the strife now waging
  Paints thy cheer;
And, with spirit saddened,
  I review
Loss of what once gladdened
  Like thy dew.

Friends and kindred faded
  Like thy flowers—
Hopes in anguish shaded
  Like thine hours—

Swiftly fell our sorrows
  Like thy rain—
And no brilliant morrows
  Blanched their stain.

Thus, all hope refusing,
  Long ago,
Sate the patriarch,* musing
  O'er his woe:
Aged, weary-hearted,
  Wanting bread,
Those he loved departed,
  Lost or dead.

Yet true hearts were pining
  For his name,
Filial dreams entwining
  His worn frame,
Loving hands preparing
  Rich array,
For the old man's wearing,
  Far away.

And *our* days, though painful,
  Have an end;
Our dark years are gainful,
  If they tend

* Gen. xlii. 36.

Toward that fair existence—
  That blest goal,
Where no dear one's distance
  Frets the soul.

Then, 'mid storms resembling
  Thy career,—
Full of tears and trembling—
  Pass, dark year!
Gloom thy changes followed,
  Clouds thy bier,
And thy grave hath hollowed,
  Pass, dark year!

XXI.

DEPARTURE.

THE mournful hour at length has come,
The hour that bids us part
From what was once our love-lit home,
In loneliness of heart,
Though months ago its brightness fled,
Though here we quailed with sickening dread,
And here through long suspense were led,
'Tis painful to depart.

For many a dint is on the wall,
By shrouded fingers set;
And still we listen for the fall
Of footsteps echoing yet
Along the floors they knew so well;
And even though the dimness tell
Our lamp of love gone hence—its cell
Must waken keen regret.

Ah! did that vanished light illume
  Our path, we should not grieve,
Since cheerful house and sunny room
  No spirit-fetters weave:
The roof-tree where a father dwelt,
The casement where his clasp was felt,
The hearth-stone, where in prayer he knelt,
  These, it is hard to leave.

Never to feel his hand again—
  Nor hear his voice in prayer
And gentle speech—ah, thought of pain!
  Sound on the evening air:
Wane, altered life! 'mid vernal bowers,
Or seek stern cities, void of flowers;
How can a home of earth seem ours
  When *he* will not be there?

Farewell, dear home, a long farewell,
  Imploring, ere we go,
For others fated here to dwell,
  That they may never know
One tithe of all our care and grief,
While waiting, hopeless of relief,
Like crew on raft near sunken reef,
  For final overthrow.

And would that in this hallowed place,
His influence might stay,
With silent, yet availing grace,
Inclining men to pray;
Hushing each thought, each word of ill,
As sometimes on a dew-bathed hill
The morning freshness lingers still,
When the dew is dried away!

XXII.

ST. JOHN'S PARK.

We rested there, one Sabbath noon,
  While, with unceasing chime,
To sweetest madrigals of June
  The fountain murmured time,
And trees and flowers, in gladsome light,
Dreamed not of hurricane or blight.

Brightly, those waving boughs between,
  The golden sunshine glanced,
On turf all newly mown and green,
  The very shadows danced,
And yet around the spot there lay
The stillness of the Sabbath day.

Pleased with the pause from deafening din
And turmoil of the week,
We felt as mariners, who win
(Far from the port they seek)
Brief tarry in some verdant isle,
That cheers them for a little while.

And mute and moveless, long gazed we
Like half-entrancéd folk,
Till one voice, dearest of the three,
The spell of silence broke:
"Had I but riches, I would rear
A cottage for my darlings here!

"Through the long alleys, trim and cool,
In summer we might walk,
When moonlight touch'd yon lucent pool
Beside its margin talk;
From noise and dust and trouble free,
How pleasant would our dwelling be!"

E'en as he spoke, those playful words
Sent to my heart a chill,
And shivered through its inmost chords
With sudden, boding thrill,
While I recalled the dismal show
Once frequent on that field of woe.

For there were gloomy sights and sounds
  Witnessed, in olden days,
Where now the foot of childhood bounds,
  And the white fountain plays;
It was a place of burial then,[5]
For strangers and plague-stricken men.

And thus Hope's ray our home might gild—
  Love's branches o'er it wave—
Yet nestling there, we did but build
  A mansion on a grave,
And costly must the reckoning be,
Paid, dearest, in our tears for thee!

XXIII.

CLOUDS.

"And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds; but the wind passeth and cleanseth them." Job xxxvii. 21.

Sullen clouds around us lower,
Father, since that dark, dark hour,
When the Sea's unbridled power

Girt in deathly grasp thy form,
Stilled each crimson current warm,
Bade thy calm life ebb in storm.

Aye! but could we part the cloud,
By whose pressure faith is bowed—
Gladness stifled—courage cowed,

And the hidden radiance test,
Beaming on thy sinless breast,
O how bright would seem thy rest!

He who treads, ere dawning-time,
Cliffs no low-born mist may climb,
From their summits sees, at prime,

Silvery billows 'neath him swell,
And within them rainbows tell
Where the auroral smile first fell:

Yet the same clouds densely swim
O'er the hind, in lowlands dim,
And reveal no light to him.

O Thou Wind of Life Divine!
Draw us, with reviving sign,
Toward the heights where glories shine.

Holy Spirit! Thou canst stir
Balm-breaths from the land of myrrh*
Round the mist-wreathed Sepulchre!

Pass before our path, and cleanse
Shadows from these solemn glens;
Teach us, through Faith's crystal lens,

* Cant. ch. iv. 6.

Looks of patience to uplift,
Till the dark clouds past us drift,
Opening many an azure rift.

Or if darkness ne'er again
From our destiny may wane—
"Clouds returning after rain"—

With inheartening gales of grace
To endurance courage brace,
Till we reach a cloudless place!

XXIV.

MESSAGES TO THE DEAD.

Would it not soothe us, in an hour of sighing,
To bow the head
Down by the couch whereon some friend was lying,
Ere life were fled,
And send a message by the loved one dying
To the loved dead?

When kinsfolk here to other homes are going,
We gladly break
The choicest buds within our gardens growing,
And bid them take
The flowery gifts to some who prize their blowing,
For our love's sake.

Or if no voiceless, yet expressive token
Its aid may lend
To waft our meaning, then in language broken,
Oft we commend
Assurance of a love more felt than spoken,
To each far friend.

Why then to those who live in sunlight clearer,
Should there not go
Whispers of love by death made holier, dearer—
Bidding them know
How their sweet memory to our souls lies nearer
Than aught below?

And where may messenger be found more fitting
Such word to bear,
Than gentle spirit from this gray Earth flitting
To Heaven's pure air,
And with its last fond smile together knitting
Friends here and there?

My Father, if upon my path were shining
Skies softly blue—
And there were blossoms in its hedges twining,
All moist with dew;
If on the Rod and Staff my faith reclining,
No faltering knew—

Then, as an eaglet to the noon-beams turning,
It were delight
To bid thy gaze, mine upward way discerning,
Pronounce it bright;
To breathe some sentence, like a meteor burning
Through the grave's night.

Or if thy gladness, in yon dazzling regions,
Were incomplete,
And thou could'st miss me from those ransomed legions—
That throngéd street—
Or in the yielding of thy soul's allegiance,
One hindrance meet—

Then would I seek through dying lips to send thee
Tones clarion-clear,
Would plead with Christ for angels to defend thee,
Give faith for fear;
Yea, drain my life-blood, so I might but lend thee
New strength and cheer.

But what, belovéd, to thy perfect dwelling,
Can I supply?
The tears that from my troubled heart are welling,
Thou canst not dry;
And who would feel Earth's woes in Heaven worth telling?
Not thou—nor I.

XXV.

CHEERFULNESS.

When first we knew the love-eclipse,
Sent through our lives to stay,
We thought around these quivering lips
Smiles never more could play;
That kindly souls, by nature glad,
Hearing our sorrow, must grow sad,
And in our presence, ever after,
The lightest-hearted check their laughter.
It was not so. For a brief space,
Friends greeted each wan, tearful face,
With looks of answering woe:
Then the world's river rolled along
Its olden course through mart and throng;
How could that restless flow
Of life and action turn aside
To mourn because one wavelet died?

And thus we learned that tears are vain,
  And vain each uttered moan;
The clouded soul must hoard its rain,
  Till it can weep alone.
In every life-skein knots of ill
Unravel at the LORD's good will:
Why dim the hopes on others dawning,
Because our own are turned to mourning?
When merry tongues to mirth beguile,
We give them back a ready smile,
  With calm and cheerful air;
It must be so. Light speech and jest
Are proffered to wayfaring guest;
  We ask him not to share
The dull, dark chamber where, at eve,
We sit in solitude and grieve.

As from that silent Cumbrian lake,[6]
  Whose waters veil a star,
Tall crags and boles and tangled brake
  The daylight's entrance bar,
That rests on wold and woody steep,
Yet fails to pierce the holy deep,
Where, each intrusive look defying,
The loveliest gem of Night is lying:
So, dearest, are we forced to bear
Much of Life's broad and blinding glare;

But far beneath it lies
In our heart's depths, a darkened pool,
A low recess it cannot rule;
And from the upper skies,
There thy mild beams reflected are,
O thou remote, but radiant star!

XXVI.

THE WISH.

"I find much difficulty arising from indwelling sin. Oh! when shall I be freed from its dominion?

Extract from an old Journal, kept by my Father in his youth.

Heroes have wept o'er the wearying dearth
Of thrones and realms on the subject earth:
Poets, in cadence sad and stern
As the sorrow pictured on Pagan urn,
Have sung of a Freedom they might not win:
Thou, oh belovéd, didst mourn for sin.

Yet the soft light of life's youthful day,
When this plaint was written, around thee lay,
The peace of God in thy heart had place,
It lent to thy bearing a quiet grace,
And none who were near thee discerned the need
Of thine own deep longing to be freed.

Others might trace thy swift growth, and see
How the sapling was changing to shadowy tree—
But unto thee all uncouth and dark
Seemed the gnarling boughs, and the roughening bark,

And this was thy sigh o'er each fertile shoot,
"Leaves may be fair, but they are not fruit.

"Must I bear this burthen for many a year
Of toil and struggle and sorrowing fear?
Will affiance forever fail and faint,
Through this cruel serfdom, this clinging taint?
O, to be free from my sin-linked chain!
When shall I wake, and deliverance gain?"

Did no passing angel hear the cry,
And pause on his mission to breathe reply?
"Youth's bright Spring must to Summer flush,
Summer days into Autumn blush,
Ere that passionate prayer may an answer find,
Or thy bosom-serpent his coil unwind.

"Yet a golden season shall come at last,
A lull in the long relentless blast,
For Redeeming Love will a radiance throw
Over the road where the burthened go,
And the shadows of evening are not for thee,
Long ere they lengthen, thou wilt be free!

"Free as the skylark, at early morn,
Leaving her younglings to hail the dawn;
Free as the mariner-fish that laves
Its threatened sail beneath coral caves;
Free as a seraph, that soars and sings,
And basks in the smile of the King of Kings."

XXVII.

"SUDDEN DEATH, SUDDEN GLORY."

Isaiah xxxv. 4–10.

Fear not, fearful heart, be strong!
For thy Saviour's glad appearing,
Though He seem to tarry long,
With unhoped-for speed is nearing.
Lo! the morning breaks apace,
And the darkness, fleeing,
Leaves the glory of His face
Open to thy seeing.
Soon thy dull, uncertain ear
Angel-melodies shall hear,
And thy stammering lip be telling
All the rapture in thee swelling.

Long thy doubtful eyes have bent
On Simoom and sand their glances;
Now thy desert-time is spent,
And past toil repose enhances.
Where the mirage anguish dealt,
Sheltered springs are flowing;
And in dens where dragons dwelt,
Grass with rushes growing.
Holy is thy path, and plain,
Free from weed or root of bane;
And no enemy hath power
There to ravin and devour.

Fear not therefore! He who gave
Life for thy salvation calls thee;
He hath sanctified the grave,
Whose abysmal gloom appals thee.
Through its door to endless day,
To His promise clinging,
All His ransomed wend their way,
Crowned with joy and singing.
O to taste that bliss undreamed,
'Mid the ranks of Christ's redeemed,
Safe from sorrow, sin, and sighing,
More than pays the pang of dying!

XXVIII.

A FEW MORE YEARS FROM HEAVEN.

"A few years would not be missed from my Eternity of bliss, and I can well afford to spare them for your sake, and the poor Burmans."

DR. JUDSON TO HIS WIFE.

A FEW more years, belovéd! Thou hast been
Tired and imperilled in thy devious way,
But now a breath of May
In verdure robeth every past ravine,
And rosy blossoms fringe life's downward slope,
Paling thy boyhood's hope.

Sun-arrows smote thee through the fervid noon—
Nor turf nor shade the churlish lanes might edge,
But near this grassy ledge,
The gush of rivulets, in lulling croon,
Woos thee to rest, o'er-canopied by trees,
On table-land of ease.

Meads lie before thee, with young lambs a-frisk,
Thick woodlands, bronzing in a bath of gold,
And loveliness untold
Suffuseth all things, as yon kingly disc,
Departing, leaves munificent largesse
Of beauty, earth to bless.

Wherefore this hurry to escape? mine own!
Thou art too weary with th' ascent, I trow,
To prize the landscape now:
But scenes and sources of delight unknown
Shall open, ere we seek the solemn strand
Of Silence, hand-in-hand.

Doth Heaven attract thee, and its gem laid wall
Dwarf the slight fences of thy lowly home?
Art thou athirst to roam,
Glades where the leaves of healing hourly fall,
And scarlet poison-buds—fair masks of sin—
Nor space nor culture win?

Oh, leave us not alone! How can we bear
The rough untwining of our lives from thine,
The lack of Love's rich wine?
A few more years from Heaven wilt thou not spare,
When hearts thou lovest desolate must be,
And joyless, wanting thee?

Then tell the beckoning angels to return,
When years have sped. Eternity is long—
Affection's pleading strong:
It is not strange they for thy coming yearn,
But Heaven hath thousands, lovable as thee,
And ah, not one have we!

XXIX.

WHY SHOULD WE KEEP HIM?

Why should we keep him? Bid the slave
Just issued from immuring cave
To bask in warmth benign,
Forsake that new-found light and sheen,
For gloom, and damp, and harsh routine,
In the old darksome mine:

But call not back the "pure in heart,"
From earth's dim prison who depart,
Since, could they heed the call,
It were a saddening task to bind
Old flesh-bonds on reluctant mind,
Old gyves on scapéd thrall.

Why should we keep him? Soaring bird
Her long-clipt wing by free air stirred,
To room and cage remand:
Tell home-sick exile, who in fear
And stealth the mother-soil draws near,
His shallop may not land:

But seek not, in presumptuous raid,
To wrest a soul from Heaven's arcade,
Where choral tides of song
Surge on in everlasting flow,
And bright ones, blameless, come and go,
The sacred aisles among.

Why should we keep him? When afar
From sabre-clash, and brunt of war,
On secret service hies
The warrior, will his comrade ask
For stalwart form and white-plum'd casque,
To dally where he lies:

And with fond ministry assuage
His painful wound—his fever's rage?
Nay, such were craven plea!
Then urge not one whom Christ may need,
Though sense should reel—eyes fail—heart bleed,
To loiter here with thee.

XXX.

OLD LETTERS.

In cumbrous piles they lie;
Faded and yellow with the lapse of years,
Phantoms of buried hopes and buried fears,
Fossils of time gone by.

One hand hath smoothed each scrawl:
And Love with Moslem reverence fain would spare
The meanest scraps that such endorsing wear,
But finds not space for all.

Fling, then, the few where hate
Has o'er the surface trailed its cruel sign,
And sated malice peeps through every line,
Into the hungry grate.

The fruit of legal hire,
In crafty warfare waged with cautious pen,
To thwart the plottings held by knavish men,
O yield it to the fire!

The plans for future gain
By sanguine hearts propounded long ago;
Records of loss, of travel to and fro,
And labour's busy train,

Sweep, as from fallen trees,
Such leaves aside, for value they have none;
New annals open with each New-Year's sun,
And no man needeth these.

Out of the doomèd heap
What shall we winnow for a few short days
Of respite from the annihilating blaze,
Waiting o'er all to creep?

The phrases which unfold
Some poor man's gratitude for timely aid,
Or ready counsel that his fears allayed,
When other friends looked cold.

The kindly interchange
Of Christian thought and hope, with some who knew
His confidence in God, serene and true,
No trial could estrange.

And cull with tenderest care,
The half-confessions, veiled in playful mirth,
Of love and longing for his own bright hearth,
And those who clustered there.

For business nought avails
Him who with earth's activities hath done.
Cares the tired sailor, when his port is won,
For tattered cords and sails?

Ah no! but Love remains,
And deeds of goodness unto Heaven belong,
And thoughts of Jesus oft on memory throng,
When all beside them wanes.

XXXI.

THE FIRM FOOT.

"The firm foot finds firm footing, the weak falters, though it be standing on a Rock."

JOHN STERLING.

On a stern rock, shelving to the ocean,
Quickly to mine aid the dear one ran,
Placed me far above the waves' wild motion,
Saying, "Let me help you while I can."

Circled by his arm, I viewed abysses
Where insurgent billows froth and roar,
And the daring foam defiance hisses
To impassive boulders on the shore.

Firm his footing, often though I faltered,
While down reef-girt crevices we peered,
Scarce an errant gleam with Twilight paltered—
Captive Twilight, in those donjons sphered.

Sadder omens in our sky now darkle,
Deeper fissures our advance impede:
But his cheering smiles no more may sparkle,
Nor his strong arm give the help we need.

Yet why pine we thus for human nerving?
Murmur when afflictions round us flock?
Lies there not, in majesty unswerving,
Still beneath our feet the Perfect Rock?

Let the rushing sea-swell howl and heighten,
And the loud winds buffet as they list,
Soon the firmament anew shall brighten,
By each rampant wave the Rock be kiss'd.

Ah, we know it, yet if storms be raving,
Will the pain-pressed weakling move as lithe
As the mariner from boyhood braving
Danger with calm brow and carol blithe?

So this heart of mine, in faith unsteady,
Longeth for the days ere grief began,
Longeth for the voice, with love once ready,
Saying, "Let me help you while I can."

By the magnet-force within Thee centered,
Bind us to Thyself, O Rock of Peace!
And our yearnings for the strong ones entered
Into Thy safe covert, then will cease.

XXXII.

I WOULD NOT BE WITHOUT THIS GRAVE.

I WOULD not be without this grave,
  Though countless wealth its purchase were,
The simplest weeds that near it wave,
  To proud exotics I prefer,
And think no plot of verdure vies
With that where clay so precious lies.

My coming hardly scares the ants
  From toil and traffic through the grass,
Nor back to his sequestered haunts
  Springs the shy squirrel when I pass,
Conscious, perchance, he need not fear
One who is glad to linger here.

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And the bright sunshine wakens thought
  Of days as bright, when thou and I,
On bloom-enamelled prairies, sought
  Which of our steeds would faster fly:
Lily and heath, and rose-fraught bough,
Lavished their odors then as now.

But now, my love, thou art not here—
  It is the acmé of my bliss
To kiss the sods above thy bier,
  And dream I feel thy answering kiss,
That, breathed upon this sacred knoll,
My sighs may penetrate thy soul.

To watch the sunbeams, as they glint
  And fleck the sward with quivering ray,
Fancying the while, they dimly hint
  Glories that cluster round thy way,
Till the soft fleece-clouds seem to hold
Thy semblance in their silvery fold.

To think the wintry storms of snow
  Veiling thy tomb, in swift descent
And dazzling purity, but show
  How gleams the raiment without rent,
Blemish or flaw, that round thee flows:
No fuller's skill such whiteness knows.

CENTRAL CIRCULATION

Oh had thy last long sleep been slept
  On Ocean's ever-blanching floor,
Or had the wild tornado swept
  Thine ashes to a hostile shore,
I could not kneel, as now I kneel,
Nor thy calm presence near me feel.

And therefore, in mine hours of care,
  I muse on this belovèd mound—
This chapel of my spirit, where
  In silent worship strength is found,
And ask, what blessing could I crave
Like the possession of this grave?

XXXIII.

YOUTH HAS FLED.

Youth has fled!
Life's fresh garlands all are dead.
Youth has fled!
And its fair companions twain,
Joy and Hope, come not again.

O how bright
Looked my life in Hope's sweet light!
O how bright
Seemed the rose-hued scenes that lay
In her vista far away.

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Joy stood there,
And his proud lip laughed at care;
Asking, with triumphant eye,
In Love's presence who could sigh,
Grieve or die?
Blind to foes that near him staid,
Couched in cruel ambuscade.

Swift and strange
Came the dreary, dreary change;
And my summer playmates went
Into life-long banishment.

Joy's fond schemes
Faded like forgotten dreams,
As the clasp of Love relaxed,
Pallid Hope's gay tinting waxed,
And Youth's force, no longer fed,
Failed, as dahlias droop the head,
Too early by keen frost disquieted.

What then is left
To one thus cheerless and bereft?
Must I not henceforth bend my wistful gaze
On the bleak earth, in sorrow and amaze?
My crippled heart,
How can it suffer such enfeebling smart,
And in life's caravan again have part?

Nay, lift thine eye,
O child of God, on high!
Take Patience for thy staff, and calmly climb
The narrow way across the Hills of Time.
Seemeth it long and lonely? When it ends,
Thou wilt be welcomed by thy banished friends,
For Joy awaits
Thy passage through the empearléd gates;
By Love's own hand thy weary head
Will be anew engarlanded;
Then, too, shall Hope and Youth from exile break,
And never more deceive thee nor forsake!

XXXIV.

THE WALDENSIAN PASTOR.*

THERE was silence—thrilling silence—in the wide
and well-filled hall,
Where reverend figures rose to greet a man of stature
small,
And gathering close around him, formed a living,
breathing wall.

All eyes were full of kindness, while they marked
the slender frame,
The sun-browned visage glowing. half with pleasure,
half with shame,
And the sweet though broken syllables, that faltered
as they came.

For through his frail, embarrassed form, there coursed
the ancient blood
Of a race that dared the wrath of Rome—her witche-
ries withstood—
And stemmed through mediæval years her faith-en-
gulphing flood;

* Rev. J. P. Revel, who visited America in 1853, as a delegate from the Waldensian churches.

Who kept the Word of Life unharmed, as dark volcanoes hold
Fires of strange depth and potency beneath unsightly mould,
That burn in spite of storm and sun, and sterile surface cold.

And methought both hall and audience seemed from vision to dissolve,
While in their stead did beetling crags, and barren vales evolve,
Where skin-clad shepherds led their flocks, in meek yet firm resolve.

I saw the traitorous compact close in brief and bloody strife—
With massacre of white-haired men, and girls in flush of life—
With three score throats on one fell morn, bared lamb-like, to the knife.

And I caught the wail of frightened babes—the mother's piercing shriek,
When her child-martyr downward rolled o'er precipice and peak,
And mountain-vultures traced its path, with keen insatiate beak.

I beheld the face of Cromwell, when the tidings
crossed the wave,
And his swiftly-penned reproaches, backed by arma-
ment and glaive,
Won protection for the kindred of the saints he could
not save.

And I heard the voice of Milton tell, in deep prophetic
tone,
Of the awful wrath impending over tiara and throne,
When God maketh inquisition for the murder of His
own.

Then with bowed head I hid my tears, for they were
falling fast,
At thought of *thee*, no longer here, as in like seasons
past,
When I could view in thy dear face, mine own emo-
tions glass'd.

O there are higher, older Hills than rise on Vaudois
ground!
By clearer lakes enjewelled, and with virgin turrets
crowned;
Where the fury of the oppressor hath at last a limit
found.

There from martyrs and confessors, and from saints
of olden days,
Men of whom earth was not worthy, and whose suf-
ferings meet no praise,
Thou mayest learn the Noble Lesson,[7] and the rude
Waldensian lays.

There no rough and biting tempests o'er defenceless
dwellings howl,
There no direr storm lies brooding beneath monkish
robe and cowl,
That with false pretence of friendship, around peace-
ful hamlets prowl.

Not in twos, and threes, and fifties, do they meet for
worship now,
And no sentinel is watching upon cliff or sturdy
bough,
To discern the tramp of soldiers, and due space for
flight allow.

Nor are flaming beacons planted, with a flicker wild
and bright,
To denote some secret council, amid valleys wrapped
in night,
For alike on plain and fastness shines the One Eternal
Light.

Well I know that it is better in that blesséd land to bide,
Than to gaze on human weakness, though to early saints allied—
Why then, if thy gain is certain, cannot I be satisfied?

God be with the gentle stranger! who has met a welcome here,
Who, of foreign name and birth-place, hath a lineage ever dear,
God protect and guide his journey—keep him safe from foe and fear!

But for thee, love, prayer were needless, since thy longings are fulfilled,
Since thy faith with sight is mingled, and each wandering wish is stilled
Into perfect acquiescence with whatever God has willed.

My dream is gone—From Alpine heights fades off the roseate glow,
I see no longer peasant-groups, at prayer amid the snow;
But reverend men who part in peace, and pondering, homeward go.

XXXV.

SYMPATHY.

STRONG are the angels, pure and strong,[8]
And dearest, thou art with them now—
Like powers of soul to thee belong,
Like purity from dream of wrong,
Rash deed, or futile vow.

Thou delv'st, uncalled by lapsing hour,
In mines of rapture ever-new;
The while my heart—a trampled flower—
Asks—is there aught of peace or power
In common with us two?

How,—crushed beneath the hoof of care,
Unskilled to rise and bloom aright,—
How may its grovelling fibres share
True sympathy with saints who wear
Heaven's panoply of light?

They may—the Polar star on high
  Looks northward still in duteous aim :
But Polar plants on prairies lie,
And summer droughts their petals dry—
  Yet the same Pole doth claim

From both liege service,—though in vest
  Of light, the star through ether rides ;
While serpents glide with venomed crest,
And glaring heats all growth molest,
  Where the weak plant abides.

XXXVI.

THE RECALL.

Come back to me, mine own!
O let thy re-assuring look once more
Probe, as in times of yore,
My dumb disquiet to its inner core!
Chase every terror, and my doubts arrest,
Till childhood's careless rest
Creeps o'er me, folded to my father's breast,—
Come back to me, mine own!

Come—it is very long
Since I have seen thee—bitter lore is gleaned—
Dark years have intervened—
And from all ties, save one, my heart is weaned.
Ah! in thy presence ever seemed I safe,
No surly foe might chafe
Thy child, nor fling her forth, a helpless waif,
On floods of strife and wrong.

'Tis said the Genoese[9]
Turn trembling from the fire-flies' fitful light,
And close their casements tight,
Lest the mild flashes come from parted sprite
That loves to hover near its earthly bower,
And breathe, in starry shower,
Its blessing upon friends who shrink and cower,
Nor dare the signal seize.

But come thou back, mine own!
I will not blench, nor ask thee to desist,
Though on my brow or wrist,
A fadeless brand reveal[10] where thou hast kiss'd.
Nay, if thy spirit-touch with horror fill
Frail sense, and pulses chill,—
The windows of my soul shall open still—
Come back to me, mine own!

Come—for I long to hear
If the fair dreams of Heaven we used to weave
From clues inspired ones leave,
Were but as children's guesses, who believe
They can divine, by wavings of the veil,
When foot-lights flash and pale,
The unseen drama in its bright detail?
Now—all to thee is clear.

Come back to me, mine own!
Come when the Sabbath, in fresh garments decked,
Serenely would collect
What spars of holy thought the week has wrecked.
In hush of twilight, or with midnight tread,
When the wan moonbeams shed
Their mournful influence near my pillowed head,
Come back to me, mine own!

But come not when I die,—
Lest countersign of Faith forgotten be
In joy of meeting thee.
In that dread moment I would only see
Jesus, our Surety, our Unfailing Guide;
No earth-born staff may bide
The swelling of death's dark, impetuous tide.
Then come not when I die!

Come when, the ford passed o'er,
Unto my weary soul the boon is given—
Sin's latest shackle riven—
To change this life of care for rest in Heaven.
Then, at my call, no longer unavailing,
Come thou, mine advent hailing
To seas of bliss, where thou hast long been sailing,
And leave me nevermore!

XXXVII.

"LET NOT HIM THAT GIRDETH ON THE HARNESS BOAST HIMSELF AS HE THAT PUTTETH IT OFF."

I SATE, one pleasant morn of Spring,
With Christians, met for early prayer,
And heard their voices ring
God's praises through the air.

And then the Pastor said, "I deem
That like the morning's vernal calm
Is youthful convert's dream,
When first he feels the balm

"Of pardoning love, and truly blest,
On his dear Lord reclines, secure
Such happy, happy rest,
Will all through life endure.

"He fain, like Bird of Paradise,
With plumes unsoiled, would float along,
Sweet light his hourly prize,
And joy his only song:

"While soon, how soon, some reckless storm
To earth the astonished dreamer flings,
Where mire and sand deform
His weary, battered wings."

Then answered one of buoyant mien,
(The sunshine on his brow was sweet,)
"Not so—on Christ who lean,
Their safety is complete.

"My heart hath tasted of His love:
Can aught belonging to the dust
His constant care remove,
Or shake my clinging trust?

"Let furious storms around me roll—
Their waters will but wash my wing,
And passing, make my soul
More gladly heavenward spring!"

With lenient smile the Pastor heard
His boast, and watched his look elate,
Nor sought, by trenchant word,
His triumph to abate.

But thinking grief might quickly bid
That glad ingenuous carol change
To the deep pathos hid
In music's minor range:

I wept—remembering other days,
When pensive thankfulness and pain
Met in my father's gaze,
And checked my soaring strain.

I marvelled much he did not share
My fondness for each vaunting lay,
That challenged earth and air
A Christian to dismay:

But he had suffered more than I,
Had learned how in refining flame,
Would Jesus purify
All souls that to Him came.

The neophyte, by furnace-door,[11]
Untouched by pain, with warmth replete,
May laud the beaming ore—
And love th' innocuous heat:

They who have felt the forked fire
Rive its fierce way through quivering vein,
Tempt not, in rash desire,
The crucible again.

They only ask for grace to bear
Each *needful* pang, till fully purged
From dross, the metal fair
In glory hath emerged.

XXXVIII.

FROM JAFFA TO JERUSALEM.

O MAGIC words! what joyous thought
Their utterance in my girlhood brought!
O pleasant nights! when we were wont to trace
In bright, anticipative glee,
(Finger and lip from tremor free)
Our plans of travel to each Holy Place.

To talk of some auspicious morn,
When, by light breezes onward borne
Over the Isle-flecked Sea in wingéd keel,
Our pilgrim-feet at length should land
On Jaffa's time-encrusted sand,
Our souls the rush of recollections feel.

Watching the sapphire breakers rear,
To think of Peter, wandering near:
Another Perseus,[13] hurrying to unlock
The spells that heathen empires bound
In chains more hopeless far than wound
Of old fair maiden unto fatal rock.

There, too, the Lion-hearted King[14]
Made Paynim helm and corslet ring,
By his sole presence turned the battle's tide:
There Saladeen the valiant gave
A charger to his foeman brave:
There knelt St. Louis[14] when his mother died.

There haughty Walter de Brienne[15]
Cheered from the crucifix his men:
And there the gentle Godfrey[16] dying lay,
Who, since the King of Kings had worn
A mocking coronal of thorn,
Pushed golden circlet from his brows away.

On some succeeding morn to hear
The name that on crusading ear
With full requital for past anguish fell;
Then tearful shouts the tidings hailed[17]
Through varying hosts one heart prevailed,
Heedless of broils which on the way befell.

To climb each venerable mound,
Mark Zion's bulwarks, moss-embrowned,
Where gray-haired mourners[16] wail for Israel's woes;
With tears of gratitude to wet
The solemn sward of Olivet,
And track the path to Bethany that goes.

Oh vanished vision of delight!
We would not now, e'en if we might,
Again those folded plans to daylight ope:
The well-known words are potent still
To send through every pulse a thrill,
But 'tis a thrill of memory, not of hope.

For thou hast gained a higher goal,
It troubles not thy favored soul,
In the true Zion, rich with gold and gem,
That while on earth it was not thine
To press the soil of Palestine,
Or greet with joyful tongue Jerusalem.

And for ourselves, on Zion's steep,
What could we do but sit and weep,—
How might our withered hearts within us burn?
How offer up a tribute meet
In Manger-cave or Dolorous street,
Missing thy sympathy at every turn?

XXXIX.

THE THREE PICTURES.

Pictures three uncared-for dwell,
  Each in its appointed nook,
Lone as anchorite in cell,
  And as rarely meeting look:
Yet how priceless all would be,
Canvas,—card,—and ivorie—
Did they but resemble thee!

One thy likeness gives in youth,
  When a firm unbending will,
Fearless in behalf of truth,
  Bravely met and vanquished ill;
But in that unmellowed gaze,
Less of ruth and meekness stays
Than adorned thine after days.

On another may be viewed
  Symbols of the wearing strife,
And the world's solicitude
  Pressing oft on middle life.

Oh, not there thy love-glance beams,
That no longer, save in dreams,
On mine every movement streams!

In the third, with fruitless wile,
  Long the patient artist tried
To ensnare thy gentle smile,—
  Then his pencils flung aside,
Saying—"'Twas my student-plaint,
Bard or champion I could paint,
Failing ever in a saint!"

Skill of limner best is shown,
  When, in one symmetric whole,
Through resembling traits are thrown
  Hidden beauties of the soul:
Thus not one of all the three,
Poor attempts to picture thee,
Seemeth precious unto me.

But it matters not. Thy face
  Safe within my heart is shrined,
Guarded there, its dormant grace
  Soon would outward semblance find,
Had I but sufficient art
Unto canvas to impart
That true portrait in my heart.

XL.

A SKETCH.

The arching head in shapely outline told
That holiest faith controlled
All meaner passions with unrivalled sway,
And trained them to obey
The law of love: yet years of anxious thought
And weary toil had taught
The heart deep lessons, nor had Time erased
From his pale brow the lines by sorrow early traced.

Around the temples in thin tresses lay
Soft hair, and slightly gray:
The quiet mouth, so faultless in its curve,
Betokened calm reserve;
Not stoic apathy, too proud to show
A share in human woe;
But thoughtful reticence, afraid to add
New burthens unto souls already worn and sad.

And very lovely were the changeful eyne,
That used to gaze in mine
With pure affection,—oft, in musings deep,
So still, they seemed to sleep—
Yet strong when roused, as with a lightning-flash,
Ill-doers to abash—
Beaming most brightly when he heard, attent,
The messages of truth from God's own altar sent.

Ev'n strangers loved the unobtrusive grace,
So gladly yielding place
To others, for true excellence was seen
Through his retiring mien;
And they who in long friendship knew him best,
Felt, when he sank to rest,
From their own household chains a link was torn—
Mourned his untimely loss, as loving brothers mourn.

Well might they mourn him! How much more may we,
Who miss his sportive glee,—
His firm support that barred the approach of harm
With intercepting arm—
His soothing readiness our griefs to hear
With sympathetic ear—
His low, mild voice, that never failed to make
Some plea when others erred, for charity's sweet sake.

I search through shifting crowds, with instinct fine,
For lineaments like thine:
Doubtless in those I pass, their children see
Looks dear as thine to me;
Yet, love, with thine no form or face I meet
Seems ever to compete:
And the unending list of all thy worth,
Now only proves the void thy flight has left on earth.

XLI.

THE WHITE STONE

Rev. ii. 17.

O ye favored of Heaven! to whom are brought
  Crystals with conquering name,
Surely the guerdon with triumph is fraught,
And the ciphers are bright with a reflex caught
  From the Citadel whence they came.

Do they not glisten in vivid light,
  Pure as the lambent rays
Gleaming from bulwarks that banish night,
Founded in beryl and chrysolite,
  Sunless, yet all a-blaze?

And the mystic graving no eye may scan,
  Hath it not marvellous power
To aid the possessor in arduous plan,
Blasting his foes with puïssant ban,
  Prescient of perilous hour?

Nay—the holy signet is white and cold,
No rich colors vein its core,
And its contact chilleth, as when we hold
Hands in our own whose pale stiffening fold
Shall return our clasp no more.

And the brilliant hues in earth's bubbles starred
At the stone's sure test, grow dim:
For it comes from a Brother whose "face was marred,"
And the swart lines, carven by stylet hard,
With a strange, sad meaning brim.

'Tis a Stone of Sorrow! O friends who grieve
In trials you may not tell!
Meekly the gift of your Lord receive,
For the tears you weep and the sighs you heave,
He knows and apportions well:

And brightly yet through each line of woe,
Shall a prismal lustre peer,
When they who suffered with Christ below,
Read by His Love in meridian glow,
Sorrows that crushed them here

XLII.

THE QUEST FOR THE SPIRIT.

"WHERE," said the Teacher,[19] "to a heathen Sage,
  Where, when this stage
Of life is ended, doth the spirit go?"
  "Ah, did we know,"
Sighed the sad Indian, "think you we would rest
  Till our fond quest
Had followed with untiring zeal its track,
And to accustomed haunts had won it back?"

Thus for thy dead, poor Pagan, thou dost grope,
  Devoid of hope;
While hearts more wisely trained thy longing share,
  And almost dare
At Death's dark robe in agony to snatch,
  Might they but catch
One glimpse, though fleeting, of the friends they love,
Newly enfeoffed in estates above.

Shame on our hearts! that yield because they must,
And will not trust
Our treasures unto Him whose peerless might
Marshals their flight;
Though in full-force,—yea, sealed with bleeding hands,
The promise stands,
And from a Saviour's love, a Saviour's side,
Nor death nor life believers may divide.

Long years ago, a lady, fair and good,
In durance stood,
Gazing on warriors of iron race,
With passive grace.
Strong though her ramparts—her retainers, bold—
They could not hold
A garrison assailed with lawless brands
Borne through the midnight by out-numbering bands.

So all was lost. All, did I say? not all,
While, safe from thrall,
Her absent lord could in concealment dwell.
They bade her tell
His place of hiding—swore, if she would speak,
No rage to wreak
On her rich harvests, or her hapless child,
Else spoiled and murdered: but the matron smiled;

Alike at threat and bribe, as one who knew
Sore she must rue
Speech or refusal: till, with rallied strength,
She owned at length,
Would but her conquerors from bondage spare
The youthful heir,
So should the refuge that his sire concealed,
Be as a ransom for the boy revealed.

And it was done. Her promise won its meed,
Her child was freed.
Then with unblenching eye, and cheek that burned,
The mother turned:
"Here in my heart my husband lieth hid—
Now, will ye bid
Doomsman and falchion for his neck prepare?
Your way is open—search, and find him there!"

Surely this legend, if we heed it, will
Comfort instil.
Is there not One who to our seeking cry,
Gives like reply?
"Mourners, the dear ones whom ye cannot see,
Are safe with me;
And ye, by faith, their happiness may share,
Turn to my heart—and ye shall find them there?"

XLIII.

MY MOTHER'S SONG.

Dear Mother, sing the ballad, sung
So oft in olden time,
For happy memories are strung
Like beads upon the rhyme.
Give swell and trill
Full utterance, till
This harrowing fear
Shall disappear,
And all life's dissonances flee
Before that tuneful rosarie;
That sun-ray flung on rime.

Sing it; let each melodious note
Revive some buried joy;
And shadowy visions downward float,
As bees round blue-bells toy;

Oh, could the strain
But wake again
Ears that once heard
Entranced, each word,
And softly on our senses rise
The glancing of belovèd eyes,
Lured by the sweet decoy!

Sing it no more—that joyous song,
So full of other years!
The flexile voice, in gladness strong,
Grows tremulous with tears;
And lips that smiled,
By music wiled
From care, lie cold
In earth's dark fold.
Send from sad heart through chamber dim,
Death-dirge and penitential hymn—
Not songs of happy years!

XLIV.

THE SICK ROOM.

The lagging hours are dreary, O how dreary!
Yet 'neath my windows, all night long,
The tramp of passers marks till I am weary,
Each moment as by stroke of gong—
Yet warily beside my bed,
My tender nurses tread;
And still through painful hours I pine,
To feel my father's arm once more around me twine.

What save the missing of his care hath wrought
This malady? Each lonely year
Unto my failing strength fresh burthens brought:
How gaily borne, had he been here!
With him how easy to sustain
The stress on heart and brain!
How pleasant to my feverish ear
Would sound one prayer of his, now softly whispered near!

Fond futile fancies! rather let me turn,
In each new phase of want or pain,
To One who weakest suppliant will not spurn,
Who sees my languor, and is fain
From these dull eyes to wipe the tear,
Quelling each grief and fear,
And warding perils from my side,
When through the Straits of Death my shuddering prow must glide.

O'er all mine earthly future darkness reigns,
O Lamb of God, be Thou my Light!
I cannot worship now in hallowed fanes,
Yet help me, as an acolyte,
To hymn Thy praises, since I know
My stunted faith will grow
Beneath Thy training, firmer far
Than if unpruned it lay where sunnier vineyards are.

Lord, at Thy voice the hurricane is quiet,
Winds from the South the vex'd Earth tame,
And Thou, with but a word, canst hush the riot
Careering through my powerless frame:
Shall not Thy hand my spirit hold,
As mailèd chieftain[20] bold
Some jewel precious in his eyes,
Would in clenched palm secure from covetous emprise?

Or if awhile it please Thee to prolong
This wasting anguish, teach me how
To kiss Thy loving rod, though sorrows throng,
And humbly to Thy will to bow:
If health should never more be mine,
Still let me not repine:
The shallow brooks of Time may fail—
With Thee all fulness dwells, who seek Thee must prevail.

XLV.

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

SELDOM, when life is young and dear,
And all whom best we love surround us,
Heed we the viewless guardians near,
Who move in fair battalions round us.
If kindred voices say "Look up,"
Each threatening cloud some blue discloses,
And pledged by them, in bitterest cup,
Some sweetness still reposes.

Not until, heart-oppressed and cold,
We sit by joy's last dying ember,
Do angels tell us, as of old,
* "The words your Master spake, remember."
And while from ashen fruits of earth,
We turn away with loathing shiver,
Prove to our parching souls the worth
Of a Life-yielding river.

* Luke xxiv. 6.

The nightingale is silent, when
The blushing Rose he loves so dearly
Bares her bright heart to breezy ken,
Or in calm lake is mirrored clearly.
He will not on her joy intrude
While the day's rumour round her ringeth,
But in her evening solitude,
Propped by a thorn, he singeth.

And rarely, when that glorious strain
Hath midnight air with music flooded,
Will listeners long for Noon's proud reign,
In robes no gem of song hath studded:
So they to whom the angels sing
"Songs in the night" of gloom and sorrow,
And memories of Jesus bring,
Sigh not for happier morrow.

Still, holy visitants, awake
New thoughts of our Redeemer's presence!
Still may your ministrations make
Each desert place of life a pleasaunce:
Your wisdom choose some potent leaf
To heal the pain within us gnawing,
Our sorrowing souls in bands of grief,
To sorrowing Saviour drawing!

Oh, go not hence! Dark cohorts wait
  Too near us, in resolved endeavor
To seize some undefended gate,
  And hold it as their own forever.
Save us, oh God! from storm of sin,
  Through hearts erewhile Thy temple darting,
From alien legions trampling in,
  And Seraphim departing.

XLVI.

THE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST'S CAUSE.

As one by one the withering leaves
  Wheel mournfully to earth,
Each like a sigh the Summer heaves
  Over its short-lived mirth;
And banshee winds shriek out their fear
Lest Spring no more, with wand of cheer,
Evoke new glories from the deepening gloom,
And clothe each barren place in turfage, moss, or bloom.

Still are we certain, year by year,
  Though the despoiling gale
O'er glebe and forest domineer,
  God's promise will not fail:
Seed-time and harvest, cold and heat,
Successive fill their office meet;
There comes no ray of light, no snow, or rain,
But nourishes in turn rich fruit and yellow grain.

And yet when from the household tree
  The loveliest branches go,
As one by one we sadly see
  Each precious form laid low,
Touched in its prime by icy breath
Upstreaming from the Vale of Death—
What hope the famished soul may then appease?
Hungering for human love—chilled through by that
    fell breeze.

God reigneth still. His word is truth,
  And without let, or pause,
Still onward, in immortal youth,
  Moves the Redeemer's cause.
Spring may tell forth her floral dower—
Autumn unroof each grove and bower—
But He who calls and checks the flood of green,
To His own kingdom's weal subdues each varying
    scene.

We know it: yet the soul grows faint,
  And the rebellious will,
Unschooled to yield without complaint,
  In faith a novice still,
Hears with deep inward pang the call
"The Master needs thy best—thine all:"
From the once loyal lip comes wayward moan,
Because the King we serve has taken back his own.

But not to one sad heart *alone*
These agonies are sent,
For martyr-souls, in ages gone,
With sharper swords were rent,
And think not victor-crown and palm
Are gathered in inglorious calm!
Can wheat of price be garnered without bale,
Till cleared from clinging chaff by oft-descending flail?

Faith in Christ's ruling solaced them,
Be it enough for thee
To know that Saviour's diadem
Gleams yet o'er land and sea.
Let not thy weeping hinder toil,[11]
Nor from His wise behests recoil:
Fearless and patient on the field abide,
Where those thou lovest fell, till with them glorified.

XLVII.

MOONLIGHT ON THE SEA-SHORE.

The shining moonbeams lie
  Upon the quiet sea—
'Tis a fair sight to many an eye—
  It is not fair to me.

Yet once I loved to spend
  Hours on the shore alone,
And dream I heard some travelled friend
  Tell, in unvarying tone—

How, from barbaric coast,
  Safe, as on daisied turf
The olive babes are early tossed,
  To frolic 'mid the surf.

How citadels of ice,
  Whose sailing turrets gleam,
At dawn of day, on seamen's eyes
  With bright but murderous beam,

Pause in their onward course,
And then, by sudden veer,
Melt on the waves in deadly force,
But leave the vessel clear.

How sparry caverns shine,
In opulence below;
In veiled beauty sea-flowers twine,
And coral arbors grow.

I knew not then the goal
To which my love must tend:
No malice murmured in thy roll,
Oh Sea, thou treacherous friend!

Till, on one fatal day,
False were thy smiles to me,
Thy strength was cruel—fierce thy spray,
Oh dark, remorseless Sea!

And thou, bland Moon, didst look
With as complacent light
Upon the woe we could not brook,
As on the waves to-night.

Therefore thy sparkling rays,
When o'er the Sea they float,
Seem, with the same oppressive gaze,
Still on our grief to gloat.

But from Heaven's holy noon,
That mocking light will flee;
Thy power evanish, callous Moon!
And thine, unpitying Sea!

While he, whose loss we weep,
Has dropped life's weary oar,
Where on cold sands no moonbeams sleep,
And storms assail no more.

XLVIII.

FAMILY PRAYER.

The buried city of the Past lies hid
By the dull Present, yet within its halls
I love to wander, from intrusion rid,
And con the pictures panelling the walls.

There in soft coloring tarrieth many a scene
We viewed together; pleasant is the show
Of lawn and coppice, fresh with early sheen,—
Of moon-lit waters, laughing as they flow.

Again in graceful sway the locust flowers
Droop their white clusters o'er our western home:
Again we while long winter evening hours
With minstrel-glamour, or with salient tome

And there are storms we baffled side by side—
Songs that enthralled us, heard and heard again—
The rush of eloquence in forceful tide,
Pouring its freshet on the captive brain.

Yet to one scene more willingly betakes
My soul-glance, and more reverent love I bear:
There,—meekly as an ambient ripple breaks
On some smooth inlet—lives *my father's prayer.*

I hear it now—the low-toned humble plea,
Through the dear name of Him who died to save,
Asking forgiveness—strength for what might be
Each day's allotment—conquest o'er the grave.

Long hath that prayer been answered. Unawares
The crown of conquest settled on thy brow;
While thy lone household desolately fares
Lacking thy counsel and thy guidance now.

But kneeling at the hour when thou didst kneel,
(Thy gentle intercessions sorely missed)
Pleading the same sure promises, we feel
As if with thine our souls were keeping tryst.

For thou art sheltered underneath the wing
That shades our goings with unwearied care,
And what are songs of praise the ransomed sing,
But ripened fruitage from the vine of prayer?

Oh, had a nation's tears bedewed thy pall—
Fame, power, and wealth our heritage been made
Through thy deservings—valueless were all
To soothe our anguish—hadst thou never prayed!

XLIX.

MY TWO DREAMS.

In the quietude of midnight, when the fevered world
lies dreaming,
And the stars keep patient vigil o'er her passing lull
of pain,
Came a sudden flash of brightness through my hearts'
dim cavern streaming,
And the form I love so fondly met my longing sight
again.

Seemed we sitting all together, in the old delightful
fashion,
In a lofty lone pavilion, and beneath us moaned the
sea,
While I read aloud the record of the Hebrew children's
passion,
From the book of Daniel's visions, lying open on my
knee.

Clanged the call to idol-worship—spake the martyrs bold denial,
With the spiral-flaming furnace, and the despot-king in view—
When my father musing murmured, "Now within that tale of trial,
I perceive far deeper meaning than as yet is plain to you."

From my trance his comment roused me. I reviewed in fleet transition,
How each tie of love was sundered—how our riven hearts had bled,
While in agony we called him,—and at once by intuition,
Knew our prayers had won his presence—we were sitting by the dead.

With the overwhelming gladness not one doubt or tremor wrestled—
In the sun-burst of his coming could no coward mote appear—
Into mine old safe refuge near his heart anew I nestled,
And there asked him of the marvels he had learned in yonder sphere.

"Love, thy soul of late was mingling with the undefiled Communion,
Where Jehovah's softened splendors on the savèd nations strike,
Since our tears have drawn thee hither, in this moment of re-union,
Ere its memory fade, O tell us, what that blissful Heaven is like?"

Long he paused without replying, till at last the words fell slowly,
"Men's ideas of Heaven are varied—tell me, daughter, what are thine?"
But his calm brow was illumined with intelligence so holy,
That I felt how high his knowledge soared above all range of mine—

Felt my soul could never fathom the infinitudes of Heaven,
Dared he tell them. Then I questioned, "Were you very happy there?"
And his answer, "*very* happy," with a smile of peace was given,
Like a summer rainbow showing storms no longer load the air.

From his side I sprang up, shrieking, "You have fed
on living manna,"
(And my frantic tones were coupled with the moaning
of the sea),
"You have walked with saints and angels—you have
learned their sweet Hosanna,
Then *I* cannot make you happy, and you will not stay
with *me*."

With the same bright smile uprising, from my longing
sight he faded,
And I wakened from my slumber, while the moaning
of the gale,
And the rain's incessant plashing, my own sense of
sorrow aided
Till night's grief and mine seemed blending in one sad
continuous wail.

Came the New Year ere I saw him next. Oh bitter
was its coming!
Very harshly on our grieving jarred each merry peal
of chimes,
Gleeful shoutings, loving wishes, and the human hive's
gay humming,
Only pained us by their echo of our joy in former
times.

We had spent the day in weeping, and at length, worn-out, I slumbered,
Still, beside his chair now vacant, I was weeping in my dream,
O'er our Future far outstretching, in a web of woes unnumbered,
Whereon lay no gloss relieving sombre hue or rugged seam.

When uplifting my wan eyelids, lo! my father was before me,
From his form effulgence raying, soft as halo round a saint;
Room and heart alike grew luminous, while pityingly o'er me,
Bent his face serene in happiness no pang of earth could taint.

And the voice was half-reproachful as he whispered "Why this anguish?"
To mine entrance into glory art thou yet unreconciled?
Canst thou wish me in this wicked world, where love must ever languish?
Flow thy tears because I come not? Oh, this is not like my child?"

And again the lovely phantom into ether melted, smiling,
As a star melts into morning, and my happy dream was o'er,
But the thoughts it stirred were pleasant, for awhile my grief beguiling,
And rejoicing in my father's joy, that night I wept no more.

L.

THANKSGIVING.

When grief's first torrent-rush subsides,
And on through banks of patience glides,
While time's soft hand, in swathes of green
Mantles the scar of what has been;

When common duties cease to bring
With hourly summons, hourly sting,
Why seems it worse, on festal days,
To wear habiliments of praise?

Are loved ones lodged beneath the mould?
Is the untended hearth-fire cold?
And dost thou sit and weep alone,
While homesteads gather in their own?

Oh, with thy mournful memories blend
Memories of Christ, thy loving Friend,
Whose care and kindness oft infuse
In bitterest herbs, most wholesome dews.

Then bless Him for the power of prayer,
Girding thy languid heart to bear—
For heaven-born thoughts of peace that steal
On harassed mourners when they kneel—

For rills of love and mercy left
Undried, in life's most lonely cleft—
For blissful intervals of ease
From torturing pain—Give thanks for these!

And bless Him that no sudden blight
Can reach the Granary of light,
Where one by one our Lord receives,
And safely stores His ripened sheaves.

Which values most home's winning sounds?
He who has never crossed its bounds,—
Or he whom long privation taught
To prize its welcome as he ought?

'Tis thus, through sorrow and unrest
God trains thy soul, with keener zest,
And deeper, holier joy, to prize
The glad Thanksgiving of the skies.

LI.

THE BIRD.

O'ER green acclivities we took our way,
One genial noon, in search of him we loved,
Strolling since morning upon treeless heights,
Where travelled breezes open their rich stores
Of briny attar, culled from myriad waves,
And redolent of vigour. He was glad
To inhale those healthful odours—to escape
For a brief season from the sultry air
Of city streets in summer, and to gaze
On the blue concave bending to the Sea,
Unchecked by lofty piles.

Meeting at length,
And pacing home together, soon he said
"What think you happened in my walk to-day?
I saw, while sauntering near yon broken wall,
A fearless robin, perching on a stone,
That calmly eyed me, and with careful hand,
I drew it, unresisting, to my side,
The bird scarce fluttered, but its brilliant eyes,
Half human in expression, dumbly sued
For swift dismissal. Smoothing then awhile

The ruffled plumage, lined with ruddiest gold,
And wondering greatly it should be so tame,
With a few loving words, I let it go,
And watched the dark wings fading up the sky,
Pleasant it seemed, yet strange!"

With a low sigh,
A bodeful murmur swelling at her heart,
A wince of pain, my mother turned away;
While I, unlearnéd in the tales of eld,
That hold such visits harbingers of death,
Lifted my glances to the lovely eyes
Beaming with kindness, saw the look of peace
Dwelling on lip and brow, and only thought
It is no marvel if to one so pure,
And mild of aspect, gentle things should come.

There were a few more days of calm delight,
Spent in long rambles by the weedy shore,
In dance and frolic with capricious waves,—
Then separation came. The dreary vault
Closed on our dear one's face, and we were left,
Alone and sad, unweeting how he died.
Had his stern struggle with the Sea effaced
The bitterness of parting? Did he feel
The Everlasting Arms beneath his soul?
Or heard he, louder than the tempest's shriek,
His wife's wild agony—his daughter's wail?

We sought the graveyard where our treasure lay,
In stricken silence, there to pray and weep,
For we were quiet as some wounded doe,
Met by keen arrow in its mirthful play,
Stunned into stillness.

By the grave we spied
A small brown object moving, which the eye
Blinded with weeping, barely could define.
It was a robin; and in passionate haste
I sprang to seize it—Aye, the prize was mine—
Thrice-blessèd guerdon! that entailed the boon
Of speedy summons from a darkened world!
The bird was beautiful, with vivid eyes
Seeming to read my soul. I stroked the wings
Caressingly awhile as he had done,
Then with unclosing fingers, bade it fly.
There was a moment's flutter—and it turned
A long look on my mother and on me,
But flew not heavenward. O'er the glittering eye
Film slowly gathered—then it gasped—grew still;
The wings drooped lifeless, and my bird was dead.
My bird was dead! it had not sprung aloft,
Like my dear father's, dwindling up the sky!
All hope of dying gone, I could but say
"My bird is dead! What may its death portend?"

We buried it beside him, and lay down
In desolation by the double grave.
Then on my spirit suddenly there stole
The meaning of the sign. His bird had come
To call him heavenward. He too spread his wings
Like the bright messenger, and rose on high
In the free sunshine.

But the other came
On voiceless errand to assuage our woe.
God sent this bird to teach us how he died.
It trembled ere the soft wings folding fell
With half-reluctant flutter in my hand:
Thus had my father for a moment shrunk
From the Death-Ocean yawning on his view.
And as the robin, with appealing gaze,
Looked a mute farewell unto her and me—
So had he given one thought of love and prayer
To each belovéd, ere, with closing eyes,
Arms meekly folded, and unmurmuring soul,
He "fell asleep."

LII

MOURNER'S LITANY.

Saviour! in Thy mercy hear us;
Pain and peril linger near us,
In our hearts, with sickening pang,
Lanceth Fear an adder-fang;
Grief, like haunting ghost, defies
All our skill to exorcise,
When o'erwhelmed, we seek Thy side,
Seems Thy favoring ear denied;
Yet for others we would plead,
Who Thy succor likewise need.
Hear us, Saviour, we beseech Thee,
Let the cry of mourners reach Thee!

Hear us Lord, for many lying
On the couch of pain and sighing—
Parched with fever, all too weak
For themselves Thy help to seek;
And for tearful watchers, who
Life's recession sadly view.
Oh, when earthly hope is fled,
Jesus, draw Thou near the bed;
Let Thy bidding health recall,
Or Thy presence Heaven forestall.
Hear us, Saviour, we beseech Thee,
Let the cry of mourners reach Thee.

Hear us for survivors, sinking
Down unfathomed deeps, and thinking—
"Can a Father, loving, wise,
His belovéd so chastise?
If we were indeed His own,
Would He leave us quite alone?"
Jesus, Thou forsaken wert,
In Thine hour of deadliest hurt:
To bereavéd hearts come nigh,
Softly breathing, "It is I."
Hear us, Saviour, we beseech Thee,
Let the cry of mourners reach Thee.

Hear us for the self-reliant,
Proven in temptation pliant,
In whose ear foul spirits shed
Mutterings of despair or dread;
Muffled in a stole of doom,
Garish light but mocks their gloom.
Jesus, who his art didst foil,
From the Spoiler rend the spoil;
Covering with Thy dintless shield,
Baffling, till he quit the field.
Hear us, Saviour, we beseech Thee,
Let the cry of mourners reach Thee.

Some there are with burthens laded,
Who must struggle on unaided,
Choke their anguish back, and rush
Forth in Life's unpitying crush:
No dear voice their terror charms,
Or the jostling crowd disarms.
Jesus, listen to their plaint,
By the wayside Thou wert faint—
Let Thy consolations dwell
In their souls—a living well.
Hear us, Saviour, we beseech Thee,
Let the cry of mourners reach Thee.

In Thy home of joy and splendor,
Still Thy love is true and tender;
Still, as when Thy life-drops fell
On Gethsemane's lone dell,
Thy compassions do not fail,
Though our faith and hope are frail.
Cheer us, Lord, as Thou didst cheer
Him, who, in remorse and fear,
Turned to Thee his dying eyes,
With a promised Paradise.
Hear us, Saviour, we beseech Thee,
Let the cry of mourners reach Thee.

LIII.

RESURGAM.

As in dark furrow living seed
Lies down to wait the term decreed,
Ere its green blade from earth be freed,
So now my father lies.

Clods on the young germ roughly press,
And gloom enwraps its loveliness,
And for a time, the winter's stress
All hope of life denies.

Not unintended, nor in vain
That long imprisoning, for the grain
Wins through its burial wondrous gain—
So shall my father rise.

Not with the form of weakness, hid
From weeping eyes 'neath fastened lid,
By hirelings borne where kinsmen bid,
Unconscious of our cries.

Not with his loving spirit framed
In narrow niche, by sorrow claimed,
And in close conflict often maimed;
Not thus shall he arise.

But safe, untrammelled, pure and meet
To pass at once, on pinion fleet,
To his soul's home—his Saviour's feet,
His dwelling in the skies!

If o'er his grave such prospects smile,
Should not their gladness reconcile
Our hearts to leave him there awhile,
In certain hope to rise?

For Christ is risen! His garments white
Left in the tomb, still lend it light;
Christ is arisen, and in His might,
My father shall arise!

L'ENVOI.

SILENCE with one we love, how dear!
On viewless bridge, but not of sighs,
From heart to heart, from eyes to eyes,
Feeling and thought find pathway clear.

Thus, love, though "song in silence" close,
We look not from the past away,
As strangers turn from tombèd clay,
Forgotten in its lone repose.

Still to thy soul our souls are wed,
And selfish murmurs may not be
Linked in that union.—Snakes will flee
From grassy leas where sheep are fed.

And though thy requiem boast no rhymes,
Like changeful bells in abbeys hung,
Whose gay carillon, deftly rung,
The wanderer's soul in music limes:

Yet unto friends who loved thee well,
Its simple words may sometimes bring
Old memories that thy name enring,
Or of thy gentle goodness tell.

Therefore with pauper-hand I gave
These weeds of song. O dearest, best!
Love is their sole, sweet claim to rest,
And wither on thy lowly grave.

NOTES.

Note 1.

No. VIII. Page 35.

"The coping moves not, by its Chief unbidden," &c.

It is not uncommon, among desert tribes, for the Sheikh to be the only person by whose authority particular wells can be opened; and sometimes he alone knows where to find them.

Note 2.

No. X. Page 40.

"And in departing, had thy saintly boon
Been the brave cloak of courage thou didst wear," &c.

In allusion to the legends of St. Martin of Tours, and St. Thomas of Canterbury (Thomas à Becket), the former of whom is said to have divided his cloak with one beggar; the latter, to have flung his furred mantle to another, with the words, "Thou hast more need of it than I."

Note 3.

No. XII. Page 43.

"I have heard of ancient vases," &c.

One of the most wonderful arts of the ancient orientals was to mould a wine-cup of delicate porcelain so cunningly, that when empty, it would appear pure and plain, but if filled with wine, would be adorned with brilliant pictures, invisible at other times.

NOTE 4.

No. XV. Page 52.

"Not ours the peace of stones," &c.

"Let us beware that our rest become not the rest of stones."
JNO. RUSKIN.

NOTE 5.

No. XXII. Page 73.

"It was a place of burial then," &c.

The plot of ground now known as St. John's Park, was used for interments during the prevalence of the yellow fever in New York.

NOTE 6

No. XXV. Page 81.

"As from that silent Cumbrian lake," &c.

Sir Walter Scott speaks, in the notes to Rokeby, of a small Lake or Tarn among the mountains of Cumberland, so shadowed over by rocks and brushwood, that it reflects stars, even at noon.

NOTE 7.

No. XXXIV. Page 105.

"Thou may'st learn the Noble Lesson, and the rude Waldensian lays."

The Waldensian Churches possess a compend of their faith, called the Noble Lesson, compiled as far back as the Eleventh century, if not earlier. Many of their hymns are also of great antiquity, though unpolished. For the incidents referred to in this poem, see Blair's "History of the Waldenses."

NOTE 8.

No. XXXV. Page 107.

"Strong are the angels, pure and strong," &c.

"The union of power with purity constitutes all that we mortals can imagine of angelic perfection."—MAD. DE STAEL.

NOTE 9.

No. XXXVI. Page 110.

"'Tis said the Genoese," &c.

There is a superstition common in the neighborhood of Genoa, probably of Moorish origin, that fireflies are the souls of departed relations. Hence the windows are closed, even on sultry nights, to exclude them.

NOTE 10.

No. XXXVI. Page 110.

"Though on my brow or wrist
A fadeless brand reveal," &c.

In the tradition of Lord Lyttleton's visit to his sister after death, the final test which convinced her of his presence, is said to have left a mark on her wrist, visible to her dying day.

NOTE 11.

No. XXXVII. Page 113.

"They who have felt the forked fire," &c.

"It is said of Christ that He shall sit as a Refiner and Purifier of silver.—Malachi iii. 3. We would like well enough to come and warm ourselves by this Refiner's fire, but the business depends on our being thrown into it."—THOMAS ADAMS, 1630.

NOTE 12.

No. XXXVIII. Page 116.

"Another Perseus, hurrying to unlock," &c.

The Greeks believed that the adventure of Perseus and Andromeda took place at Jaffa; and St. Jerome says that in his time the rock and ring to which Andromeda was bound were pointed out there.

Note 13.

No. XXXVIII. Page 116.

"There, too, the Lion-hearted King," &c.

When Richard I. of England was compelled to give up all hope of retaking Jerusalem, he set sail with a small retinue for Jaffa, and on arriving, found the gates in the hands of the Saracens, and the Christians selling their lives dearly. On this, he sprang on shore, with shield and battle-axe, retook the castle, slew the Saracens within the walls, and drove those without back to their camp. Saladdin, being told that the King of England had retaken the town, and seeing him on foot, sent him a horse of great value, charging the messenger to say that "such a man ought not to remain on foot in so great danger." A.D. 1192.

Note 14.

No. XXXVIII. Page 116.

"There knelt St. Louis when his mother died."

At Jaffa, Louis IX. of France received tidings of his mother's death. He fell on his knees, saying, "I thank thee, O my God! for having spared Madame, my dear mother, to me so long as it pleased thee, and for having now, in thy good pleasure, taken her to thyself. I loved her, it is true, above all creatures in the world, but since Thou hast taken her from me, blessed be Thy name to all eternity."

Note 15.

No. XXXVIII. Page 116.

"There haughty Walter de Brienne," &c.

Walter de Brienne, Lord of Jaffa, was taken prisoner by the Corasmins, and hung on a cross by the arms. They then showed

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him to the garrison with a threat that he should hang there till they surrendered. Raising his voice, in spite of his agony, he commanded them to hold out to the last.

NOTE 16.

No. XXXVIII. Page 116.

"And there the gentle Godfrey dying lay," &c.

Godfrey, of Boulogne, first Christian King of Jerusalem, is said to have died at Jaffa, the walls of which he had rebuilt.

NOTE 17.

No. XXXVIII. Page 116.

"Then tearful shouts the tidings hailed," &c.

It was a lovely morning when the first Crusaders drew near Jerusalem. Their enthusiasm was unbounded. "All," says an eye-witness, "had much ado to manage so great a gladness."

NOTE 18.

No. XXXVIII. Page 117.

"Where gray-haired mourners wail for Israel's woes," &c.

It is still customary for the elders of the Jews residing at Jerusalem to repair to certain parts of the ruined walls, and there lament over the desolation of their city.

NOTE 19.

No. XLII. Page 125.

"Where, said the Teacher to a heathen Sage," &c.

"Do you know whither the spirit goes after death?"

Ans.—"Do you think, that if we knew, we would not go after it, and bring it back?"—MISSIONARY ENQUIRIES AMONG THE GONDS OF INDIA.

Note 20.

No. XLIV. Page 131.

"Shall not Thy hand my spirit hold," &c.

"My Sheep," says the Saviour, "shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."—(John x. 27, 28.) The Scriptures have no rhetorical fear of mixing metaphors. It is as if the warrior's mailed palm had closed upon something that he highly prized.—Extracted from a MSS. Sermon by Rev. W. R. Williams, D.D.

Note 21.

No. XLVI. Page 138.

"Let not thy weeping hinder toil," &c.

"Weeping must not hinder sowing."—Matthew Henry.